THE RAGTIMER

MAY/JUNE 1974

PUBLISHED BY

THE RAGTIME SOCIETY

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THE RAGTIME SOCIETY
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is a non - profit corporation having the following objects:

To preserve classical ragtime music and to pursue such other activities as shall serve to maintain and develop interest in classical ragtime music and music related thereto.

HAVE A HAPPY SUMMER!

THO' SUMMER WILL
COME AND GO,
THERE IS ALWAYS
THE FALL.

THE RAGTIME SOCIETY
BASH TIME
AT TORONTO
ON OCTOBER 19, 1974
WEEKEND.

RAGTIME...
UNDER YOUR HAT

This is the 75th anniversary year for Scott Joplin's "Maple Leaf Rag" in published form. It was in 1899 that John Stark & Son, a small music publisher and dealer in Sedalia, Missouri decided to take a chance on publishing a rag that Joplin had been playing and popularizing around Sedalia for a year or so. Both men, as a result, became famous. Joplin went on to become the "King of Ragtime Composers". Stark moved on to St. Louis, and for a time to New York to become the leading publisher of Ragtime Music. The Rag was named after the Williams Brothers Maple Leaf Club at East Main in the sporting house section of turn-of-the-century Sedalia. "Maple Leaf Rag" quickly became a world-wide musical standard. There is a curious irony in the fact that many a music lover knows and enjoys listening to "Maple Leaf Rag" and yet has never heard of, or connected it with, "Ragtime".

But times are changing as more and more ragtime is heard ... or are they? The other day, Jean Cuff, in conversation with John Norris of Coda Publications about the sale of ragtime recordings, picked up a significant observation from John. He said that ragtime may not have sold well as ragtime, jazz'n blues or as rock'n roll, but that as music of today for classical buffs and the new "pop" music generation, ragtime has come into its own.

Recently I attended a social end-of-season event for members of our curling club. During the course of the evening I sat down at the grand piano and played a couple of strains from "The Entertainer" by Scott Joplin. By now you can predict the reaction. I learned that you can play ragtime if you like, but the listeners enjoyed

(Continued on Page 4)

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hearing music written for "The Sting". Perhaps the ragtime we have been working so diligently to preserve and revive is moving ahead, by rebirth, into a new life of its own.

Nevertheless a great pilgrimage back to "Square One" promises to be an historical event at Sedalia, Missouri, July 25-27, 1974, "Where Classical Ragtime Began". Don't forget, Ragtime is Ragtime is Ragtime!

Member Peter Lundberg from Sweden made an overnight visit to Toronto on Monday, May 6th. Peter was on the way home from a tour of college concert dates which he made in company with ragtimer Bob Darch. There was a hurried gathering of the ragtime clan in Toronto that amounted to a combined welcoming and send-off party. Society president, Idamay MacInnes, and others were able to share an evening with Bob and Peter at the Times Square Lounge in the King Edward Hotel. Peter knows what ragtime is all about when he sits down at the piano. We hope that now Peter is back home in Sweden again, he will find time to write and tell us about his current trip and impressions (members are referred to the book "They All Played Ragtime" which includes Peter's picture and a published copy of his musical composition "Gothenburg Rag").

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PLEASE READ THESE NOTICES

TO SOCIETY MEMBERS

1. In April and May we were suffering from the inconveniences of another Postal Service interruption which is now over. We know that during the period a large amount of incoming mail was returned to the senders. Some of you may now have to re-post mail but we are still at the same address.

2. Some of our members placed music orders for British publications CF809-123 The Dixieland New Orleans, CF810-12 Fats Waller's Piano Conceptions, and CF811-123 Jelly Roll Morton's Blues & Stomps, which arrived after a heavy run of orders had exhausted our shipment. We are still trying to get more from our U. K. source. If we can't fill your order after a few more tries, your money will be refunded. Let us know if you prefer to cancel out.

3. The next issue of THE RAGTIMER (July/August) will be accompanied by registration particulars of the 10th Annual Bash at Toronto scheduled for the weekend of Saturday, October 19, 1974. If the trend of the last two years continues it will be oversubscribed. The first come, first served principle will apply except that we will endeavour to protect members up to a cut-off date to be announced. Guests of members will still be welcome. We simply give friendly warning that if you are planning to attend, you should act promptly when the time comes, to avoid disappointment.

4. The Society membership cards and revised catalogue for 1975 will be sent out with the January/February 1975 issue of THE RAGTIMER. In the past we have waited until the March/April issue mailing to allow extended time for renewal. Please help us with our planning. The November/December issue of THE RAGTIMER will be the last one sent out to members for 1974. Your 1975 renewal will be requested in time to reach us before the end of the year. Some members have already renewed for 1975 and are not affected by the changeover.

5. Please refer to your catalogue effective March 1974 - ERRATUM - (1) Page 6 Society Reprint Sheet Music should be numbered "7". (2) Page 7 Commercially Published Sheet Music should be numbered "6".

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The Toronto Star of Saturday, March 23, 1974 carried an article by Peter Goddard about the performers who keep Toronto's night life throbbing:

"They strum, they play, they sing and they're a vital part of the city..... and ragtime is included:

"RAGTIME BOB DARCH, currently at the King Edward's Times Square Lounge until the end of the month, is probably the ideal party pianist. His strong, two-handed (or, at times, two-fisted) playing can break through any amount of chatter and get any crowd out of its after-work doldrums. But there's something more to his playing: when he doesn't have to entertain so energetically, he will, if asked, settle down to some true ragtime playing, his left hand marching up and down the keyboard with some stately chords, his right hand galloping through crisp runs and sudden multi-note flourishes for this happiest of all American musics."

(Peter Goddard is a Toronto free-lance writer.)

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The "IN MEMORIAM" column of the Toronto Star for Monday, April 1, 1974 contained the following entry:

JOPLIN, Scott - Died April 1, 1917.
World's greatest Ragtime composer.
His contribution was immeasurable.

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RECORD REVIEW

by
TEX
WYNDHAM

Fairmont 102 "Live From The Dawn Club", by Wally Rose with Lu Watters and the Yerba Buena Jazz Band.

Selections: The Pearls (#1), Pineapple Rag (#1), Easy Winners, Pastime Rag No. 5, Temptation Rag, Black and White Rag, The Pearls (#2), Pineapple Rag (#2), Hot House Rag, The Cascades, Harlem Rag, New Orleans Joys.

Personnel: Wally Rose, piano, with Harry Mordecai, banjo, Dick Lammi, string bass or tuba, and Bill Dart, drums, on all tracks; Bob Helm, clarinet, on "New Orleans Joys" and the two takes of "The Pearls"; Lu Watters and Bob Scobey, trumpets, and Turk Murply, trombone, on "New Orleans Joys" only.

Available from: Fairmont Records, P. O. Box 3392, Santa Monica, California 90403.

Dirty Shame 2001 "Trebor Tichenor, King of Folk Ragtime".

Selections: Ragtime Chimes, The Last Trip Down From Hannibal, Boom Town Echoes, Kismet Rag, Banjo Twang, The Peach, Just Ask Me, Harlem Rag, Sunflower Tickle, Ragtime In The Hollow, Weeping Willow, A Tennessee Jubilee, Ginger Snap Rag, You've Been A Good Old Wagon But You've Done Broke Down.

Available from: Dirty Shame Records, Box 5217 Hannegan Station, St. Louis, Missouri 63139.

London Phase 4 Stereo SPC 21105 "Great Scott ... The Music of Scott Joplin", by Eric Rogers.

Selections: Maple Leaf Rag, Swipesy Cakewalk, Harmony Club Waltz, Pineapple Rag, Magnetic Rag, Scott Joplin's New Rag, Bethena, Paragon Rag, Solace.

You could, if you wanted to, logically date the beginning of the ragtime revival from that time in the early 1940's when Wally Rose began playing and recording rags accompanied by the other rhythm men in Lu Watters' Yerba Buena Jazz Band. Fairmont 102 preserves the sound of that group, containing 12 selections broadcast in late 1946 live from the Dawn Club in San Francisco, where the YBJB performed regularly.

Rose is in fine form, turning in solid, swinging, two-handed piano. Moreover, sound quality is quite satisfactory -- better than you might expect from airchecks. There are, though, two aspects of this album that fall on the minus side:

- Most of the tunes were also recorded in a studio using virtually identical arrangements by the same musicians. These studio sessions have been available for nearly twenty years on the Good Time Jazz label and are likely to be in the collections of veteran ragtime addicts.

o The magnificient Watters rhythm section supported one of the loudest and most aggressive front lines in the history of traditional jazz. To do so, a very heavy and rolling rhythm was required -- a rhythm which, in its relentlessness, tends to control a solo pianist and introduce a touch of monotony into the overall program. It should be noted, however, that Watters featured Rose only on an occasional selection for variety, and that these performances, broadcast individually over a period of weeks, were never meant to be collected and heard back-to-back.

I am a Watters nut and delighted to have more YBJB material. Even a more objective reviewer would nevertheless agree, I think, that Rose's ragtime solos with the YBJB rhythm are historically important ragtime records and that any ragophile's collection should contain a sampling thereof. This LP, the only YBJB LP made up entirely of such solos (and good ones too), fills that bill nicely.

Speaking of Rose, perhaps the best ragtime he ever waxed appeared on a 10" LP, Columbia CL 6260, reviewed in this column in March-April 1971 but which has been unavailable commercially for many years. Recorded in May 1953 on a hoked-up piano (thumb tacks in the felts) in a fan's spare bedroom, the eight solos are highly infectious and swinging -- hot ragtime, not overly jazzy, with a big, full sound.

Six of those tracks have been reissued on Columbia's budget-priced subsidiary label as Harmony KH 32421, which also contains the four instrumental selections from Max Morath's two Epic LPs (see The Ragtimer, May-June 1970). Max has done those four tunes with more depth on his two recent albums for Vanguard, but the Rose solos make this one a good buy.

An important figure of the ragtime revival was Brun Campbell, a veteran ragtimer from the turn-of-the-century, who provided advice and music to Wally Rose and other aspiring ragtime pianists. Campbell died in 1953, but his easy-going, direct piano style is perpetuated not only by his records, but also by his influence on certain of today's active ragtimers. You can hear a fair amount of Campbell, for example, in the compositions and the playing of Trebor Tichenor on Dirty Shame 2001, an excellent LP of bouyant, raggedy piano solos.

Treb's line-up includes several marvelous rags that have been neglected far too long -- Broady's 1899 gem "A Tennessee Jubilee" and Hunter's 1902 strutter "Just Ask Me", to name two; but even the more familiar selections sound fresh and new when skilfully and sensitively translated into Treb's jubilant, earthy brand of "country" or "folk" ragtime.

This relatively seldom-recorded ragtime style has a march-like flavor, reflecting the music of the late 1800's out of which it grew, with relatively little that anticipates the more flexible rhythms that were absorbed by ragtime as the jazz age approached. Treb's mastery of the folk ragtime idiom is complete in every way, making his LP especially attractive to ragtimers who want examples covering the full ragtime spectrum in their collections.

There was a time, and not so long ago, when ragophiles were so starved for ragtime recordings that we would happily put up with the kind of half-hearted effort turned in by Eric Rogers on Phase 4 SPC 21105. The goal here seems to be getting through the printed score without making any obvious mistakes, issuing the results in impeccable fidelity, and trying to make a few bucks on this guy Joplin, whoever he is, while there is a market for his stuff.

Fortunately, with people like Joshua Rifkin, Bill Bolcom, Max Morath, and others, represented on available LPs, we can have Joplin played essentially as written, but with understanding and feeling; we do not have to put up with Rogers' stiff, mechanical renditions. Incredible as it may seem, considering how often "Maple Leaf Rag" has been recorded, Rogers' version is about the worst I've heard, the evenly-flowing sixteenth-note melody being casually transformed into a dotted-sixteenth-to-thirty-second line that has all the grace of a limping ostrich.

You can forget Rogers, but you might like a more successful try at the same sort of thing in GNP 902, a reissue of Portents 1, an LP of piano solos of Joplin rags recorded by Ann Charters in 1958. Mrs. Charters clearly understands what she's doing, has a light touch, and a good enough command of the keyboard to give things a reasonably comfortable feel most of the time. Her program is made up principally of tunes with names of flowers and trees in the titles, thus picking up "The Sycamore" and "Rose Leaf Rag", two fine numbers that haven't been heard much since. Some weak spots in the playing, but not bad overall.

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TURN-OF-CENTURY "ROCK AND ROLL MAKES IT AS A HIT IN 1974

(Brought to our attention by Ben Conroy Jr. of Texas and Reprinted from the trade publication BROADCASTING, April 1, 1974)

MANY PARALLELS CAN BE DRAWN BETWEEN SCOTT JOPLIN'S RAGTIME AND MODERN-DAY POP MUSIC; WHAT BRINGS IT ALL TO MIND IS CHART-CLIMBING "THE ENTERTAINER".

Scott Joplin's ragtime "The Entertainer", now enjoying broad airplay on the nation's pop music stations in a version by pianist Marvin Hamlisch, celebrates its 72nd birthday this year. And as if it weren't striking enough that a song written in 1902 is a hit in 1974 (which it wasn't in '02), it is also important to note that ragtime, a musical form Scott Joplin played a large part in developing, was America's first national pop-music craze. It was viciously attacked by educators and culture vultures; its roots are in African polyrhythms, and though highly derivative, it was a vital art which some took quite seriously while others exploited it and copied it shamelessly. In short, it was the rock and roll of the turn of the century.

"The Entertainer", culled from the soundtrack of the motion picture "The Sting", may be a bit out of period for a roaring-twenties film. By the 1920's, Tin Pan Alley and songwriters such as Irving Berlin had replaced ragtime as the main source of popular music. But the same can be said for the film "American Grafiti", set in the early sixties but with soundtrack that pays more respect to mid-fifties hits than to its contemporary music. The point is that the feeling of the past is evoked, and it is stirring and effective.

Scott Joplin wrote "The Entertainer" for James Brown and his Mandolin Club, one of the more popular black banjo-and-mandolin groups of the turn of the century that sometimes had up to 50 instruments.

Popularized in bordellos and backstreet bars at first, ragtime - like rock and roll, which would become the fourth or fifth generation of native American pop music 50 years later - was disparaged as vulgar and noisy, harsh terms indeed for music most think of today as charming or light, if not just plain antiquated. "Ragtime suggests repulsive dance halls and restaurants," the Musical American magazine said back then.

But ragtime flourished until the first World War. Scott Joplin died of syphilis on the first day of that war, in a New York welfare mental hospital at the age of 49.

Searching the record on ragtime, it seems that Europeans were far more appreciative of ragtime than were the Americans for whom the music was created. The Times of London said in 1913 that "ragtime is absolutely characteristic of its inventors - from nowhere but the United States could such music have spring . . . Nor can there be any doubt about its vigor, brimming over with life."

It is impossible to say that Mr. Hamlisch's "Entertainer" is going to do for Scott Joplin and ragtime what Bette Midler's re-make of "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy" did for the Andrews Sisters, who originally sang the number in an Abbott and Costello movie in the 40's. That song did so much for their stock that the two surviving Andrews sisters were brought out of retirement to star in a current Broadway show, "Over Here".

But everytime "The Entertainer" comes on the air - and that is happening more and more often as the song leap-frongs up the charts - it is a subtle, but honest, reminder of where almost all of American pop music began. Its origins and best practitioners were black, its structure was simple and reached many more than were able to decipher and enjoy the neo-classicists thriving in the parlors of the time. Though the Times of London wrote this following appraisal in 1913, it is no less applicable to today's pop music. "American dilettanti", its critic wrote, "never did and never will look in the right corners for vital art. A really original artist struggling under their very noses has small chance of being recognized by them . . . They associate art with Florentine frames, matinee hats and clever talk full of allusions to the dead. It would not occur to them to search for American art in the architecture of railway stations and the draughtsmanship and sketch-writing of newspapers, because they have not the wit to learn that genuine art flourishes best in the atmosphere of genuine public demand."

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DUKE ELLINGTON

1899 - 1974

By Jack Cuff

Edward Kennedy Ellington died Friday, May 24th at the age of 75 of pneumonia and cancer in both lungs. He had been hospitalized at the Columbia Presbyterian Medical Centre in New York for less than two months. Like so many black giants of jazz, the honours and tributes go to the man later. But the greatness and gentlemanly dignity of the Duke was always there.

Ellington devoted his whole being and life to his music. He was a true practicing musician who, as a bandleader, made it possible for every member of his band to share and develop because of that devotion. His stature as a composer is unquestioned. The massive array of musical works, for which he is alone responsible, combines with collaborations that create a permanent monument to his memory. He leaves as well, a rich legacy of recorded music and a wealth of audio-visual material as the result of his work in the motion picture and television fields. Ellington fits into the whole spectrum of Jazz from Ragtime to the music of tomorrow.

He was born at Washington on April 29, 1899 and began serious interest in the piano at the age of 7. His musical training followed the formalities of classical rules. His real interest however was in ragtime. At every opportunity he was listening to early ragtime pianists like Eubie Blake of Baltimore. Ellington produced his first composition at the age of 13 while still living at Washington. He named it "Soda Fountain Rag". From then on he was on his way.

His ragtime years WERE the ragtime years. The Duke moved constantly with musical trends. He leaves his mark of identification on every period of jazz development.

I sometimes viewed with despair the progress of the Duke in his musical explorations when I would remember the striding piano playing of that man from my younger days. The pianist who made the earliest and greatest impression on Ellington, during formulative years at the beginning of the twenties, was the late Willie "The Lion" Smith. Willie was a couple of years older and well established in New York. The personal style and tempo of the Lion's playing had a continuing influence on the Duke. They formed a lasting friendship which began in the Harlem rent party days when the Lion, James P. Johnson and Fats Waller operated a stride piano playing monopoly.

In later years the Duke dedicated one of his compositions to their friendship and called it "Portrait of the Lion". That was in 1939. Ellington and his band were regular visitors to Toronto. There was always a welcome and never a bad review.

My own despair about Ellington softened through conversations with the Lion. The complaint to Willie was about the extent to which the Duke had moved away from traditional Jazz. The Lion was quick to react as he thundered at me "The Duke can play stride and ragtime today like he always could." Then the Lion mellowed,

"The next time you see the Duke you tell him to play Jimmy's Carolina Shout and I'll guarantee he plays it just as well as he'd play it for me when he came in to listen at Leroys in the old days." It was not long after when a Ragtime Society member wrote with exuberance from California that he was amazed to have the very modern Duke Ellington accept his request to play some ragtime and stride. "I can't believe it, the Duke did a stride piano rendition of Carolina Shout like he was playing it every day."

Duke Ellington was truly a Jazz musician for all seasons. Now the tributes flow and now it is all too late to respond to the Duke in his own words, "We all love you madly."

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RAGTIME AND STRIDE PIANO

Mike Lipskin, writing in the San Francisco Chronicle on Sunday, April 16, 1972, looks back at the source music which has come to the fore as the result of renewed interest. The following is reprinted from that article:

"Count Basie, Debussy, Jimmy Durante, Stravinsky, Gershwin, and Chico Marx all have one thing in common: Ragtime and Harlem stride piano.

These two musical forces have been behind-the-scene influences of pop and jazz for the past 75 years, yet neither have had more than a nod by establishment.

Just now we are seeing a changing situation. With a widening communications network and music market, people are more sophisticated and because of the rock revolution and the Black Movement, the public is becoming more aware of jazz, folk and classical forms, and is sympathetic to an increasing number of musical facets.

Long ago classical and pop people used this music. Before the turn of the century Claude Debussy wrote "Golliwog's Cakewalk", with its syncopated ragtime dance beat, and Igor Stravinsky used the same sound in "Rite of Spring", often mentioning his fascination with the rhythm. George Gershwin created an interesting blend of classical sounds and ragtime stride and actually took piano lessons in Harlem, while Jimmy Durante was playing rag piano with his jazz band at Coney Island, New York, and recording for Gennett Records. Even comedy was touched by the sound. Watch Chico Marx's hands the next time a Marx Brothers film appears. He's playing stride and rag notes during segments of almost all of his piano routines.

Ragtime derived from the plantation banjo, folk music, and African rhythms, is America's first original music. This happy sound with its syncopated dancing beat spread from the sporting houses and barrooms of Missouri and Louisiana to the fashionable Eastern resorts and ultimately to the courts of Europe, reaching its peak between the 1890's and World War I.

At its best it is referred to as classical ragtime and was played and written by such composers as James Scott, Tommy Turpin, and most important, Scott Joplin, whose "Maple Leaf Rag" sold over one million copies of sheet music at a time when there was no

radio or phonograph, and the parlor piano was the main source of home entertainment.

Despite its success, ragtime was scorned by most critics and public figures because it was Black music, and was tainted with the aura of the tenderloin and barroom. Since "Proper People" did not listen to it, and the church considered it sinful, classic ragtime form went underground, but not before it left its stamp on everything from Berlin's "Alexander's Ragtime Band" to the first million selling record, Paul Whiteman's "Whispering".

NEW INTEREST: Beginning in the early 1950's ragtime found new interest and has been increasingly recorded and utilized by pianists like Ralph Sutton, Max Morath and John Arpin.

Most significant is the recent revival of "Treemonisha", Joplin's 1911 ragtime opera. Ragtime did two things: It helped start Tin Pan Alley and fathered Harlem stride piano. Just before World War I, ragtime pianists migrated to the East Coast ghettos, leaving their mark on Eubie Blake, Charles "Luckey" Roberts, Willie The Lion Smith, and the legendary James P. Johnson. Out of ragtime they synthesized stride, one of the primary jazz piano styles.

More than that, it provided the basis for a large percentage of hit songs by every composer from Gershwin to Porter and influenced, as well, the great bands of the swing era -- those of Benny Goodman, Duke Ellington and Count Basie. Called stride because the left hand moves rapidly over the keyboard, alternating between low bass notes and middle chords, it is an intricate musical language, very swinging, and difficult to master.

Its performers were not only fine jazz pianists, but composers as well. Eubie Blake wrote "I'm Just Wild About Harry", "Memories of You" and the first Black musical review on Broadway, "Shuffle Along".

Charles "Luckey" Roberts wrote the 1942 Glenn Miller hit "Moonlight Cocktail" and was one of Gershwin's piano teachers. James P. Johnson, considered the "Dean" of Harlem stride piano, wrote many fast and blues pieces, dances and even symphonic works.

In addition he taught Thomas "Fats" Waller, and directly influenced Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Art Tatum, and Thelonious Monk.

NEVER LOST FAITH. During the depression, stride stopped being performed and as the new jazz styles were created, this form was felt to be old hat. For many years after, the gifted artists worked almost in seclusion, with few people realizing their contributions to American music. But until his death in 1955, James P. never lost faith in the idiom."

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Ragtime has long since been established as a respectable and important musical form. Even so, there is still a lingering uneasiness in responding to the rendering of classical ragtime when it is juxtaposed with Bach for example, and especially when performed within a hallowed place. The Canadian Brass is a Hamilton group with a member in our Society. It is interesting to read a critic's seemingly grudging praise of

ragtime. The following appeared in The Globe and Mail of Toronto on Tuesday, April 23, 1974 and was written by John Fraser:

"BRASS QUINTET LIVELY, SLAP-HAPPY

It is no discredit to the Canadian Brass, which gave a lively concert with a wide-ranging program last night at St. James Cathedral to say that the range of effects of its several instruments is limited. Brass has marvellous qualities, but subtlety and complex coloring are not among them.

When you add to this the suspicion that all the members of this quintet - Fred Mills and Ronald Romm, trumpets; Graeme Page, French horn; Eugene Watts, trombone; and Charles Daellenbach tuba - are repressed vaudevillians, you get an insight into both the charms and gaucheries they can provide.

The Canadian Brass is certainly a welcome antidote to some of the stuffier denizens of the concert stage, but its slap-happy, jovial podium manner can spill over from stage repartee and seriously affect the music it plays. This was most noticeable in a ludicrously fast version of Bach's Fugue in G minor, which was a shame because the piece adapts well to brass sonorities. Last night's version sounded as if they all had to get to a rest-room, fast.

Playing a fairly contemporary group of pieces by Ingolf Dahl, the group seemed perplexed by an absence of flashy embellishments, apart from the opening Chorale Fantasy. Consequently, the playing rapidly deteriorated into the ordinary and bland. They made Dahl's Intermezzo and Fugue sound more pedestrian than I suspect it really is.

These things are annoying because the Canadian Brass is such an admirable ensemble and so much of what it does perform is very fine. Five short pieces from seventeenth and eighteenth century composers, which opened this CBC-sponsored concert, gave ample evidence that each of the five players not only has enviable technical facility on these very difficult instruments, but as a group they have also developed an interesting, distinctive style.

Here, and later with a Sonata by Purcell and a Stravinsky fanfare, the blowing was clean and precise, with the balance between the five nicely maintained for most of the evening - never an easy thing to do with brass.

The one piece where the Canadian Brass' bumptious buffoonery was an asset was with James Montgomery's White Fire, at least in three of its four parts. Montgomery is a member of the Canadian Electronic Ensemble, which joined the concert at the end. White Fire is for "amplified brass quintet." Each of its four sections, the program notes assure us, refers by color to the increasing intensity of fire - red, yellow, blue and white.

Had this work ended with the blue sequence, Montgomery could be written off as just another young composer producing amiable garbage for ham performers, but the final section, White, was superior fare. The music had a rich, layered texture that helped sustain an impressive mood of intensity. Best of all, one couldn't conceive of anything but brass to get this mood across effectively.

Because there is such a dearth of original brass ensemble music, the Canadian Brass will always have the problem of working with transcriptions. The Bach Fugue was a wise choice, for example, which came out badly bruised in the playing. Scott Joplin's joyous ragtime, on the other hand, was enthusiastically played but I think one could get a good debate going on whether or not it should even have been attempted.

Certainly the Canadian Brass cannot be accused of jumping on the Joplin bandwagon in the wake of the success of The Sting, which has brought the great musician, willy-nilly, from 1910 obscurity to the top of the pop charts. I thought the players indulged in too many cute gimmicks in each of three Joplin offerings, particularly Entertainer. But then again, it's a debatable point and they have won a lot of friends over the past few years with this fare.

What isn't debatable is the excellence the Canadian Brass can rise to when it feels so disposed."

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BOOK REVIEW

THE ART OF RAGTIME

by William J. Schafer and Johannes Riedel
(See Capsule Information Releases for further details.)

Here is an additional review of a book which belongs in any library of ragtime. The following appeared in The New York Times Book Review of February 3, 1974.

What is ragtime? "Syncopated melody over a regularly accented rhythmic accompaniment" says Gunther Schuller. "A type of American music, largely composed, popular from about 1890 to 1915 and characterized by strong syncopation in fast, even time," says Webster's. "The Art of Ragtime" makes the point that first there was a specific piano style, called ragging, and then the emergence of a form, or forms, in which the style reached its penultimate development: the classic rags of Scott Joplin and his two disciples, James Scott and Joseph Lamb. "Ragtime is a black musical form . . . basically it is a formation, an organization of folk melodies and musical techniques into a brief and fairly simple quadrille-like structure" say Schafer and Riedel.

The strength of this fine book lies in its careful language about music and musical effects, notoriously difficult subjects. To describe the classic rag as a "constricted, jewel like musical form . . . a microcosmic musical world" is to describe it well. There is an undeniable elegance to the following comparison of the works of James Scott and the works of Scott Joplin: "a clearer, simpler lyricism . . . Scott's rags often sound like Joplin's slightly aerated and simplified, as Handel sometimes seems a sleeker, more architectonic version of Bach." Whoever wrote those words knew what he was talking about, and the musical analyses of various rags are models of technical writing -- spare, simple language carrying complex ideas without the least sense of strain. Read the appropriate parts of "The Art of Ragtime" with a certain amount of care and you will know, in terms of music, everything there is to know about ragtime. It's a pleasurable sensation.

The hand-wringing about Joplin's early death "in isolation and neglect, misunderstood and ignored," dying of "despair in neglect" is excessive, Joplin was not the only composer who had a bad time of it in America. Nor was he the greatest. Bartok died of pneumonia brought on by malnutrition in the middle of New York City. The authors seem also to go on about race more than they need to, as if over-eager to present their liberal credentials. But these are small faults in a superb book.

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LETTERS

Letters are welcome from members. Excerpts believed to be of general interest are passed along in this section of THE RAGTIMER.

Mrs. Dorothy S. Smith
72 Eastland Avenue, Rochester, N. Y. 14618

I have a question. I am a high school teacher (English) and strictly a parlor pianist - but occasionally play ragtime for music classes. Some of the students have shown interest in a ragtime band. Do you know where I could obtain copies of arrangements for the original ragtime bands (i. e. Red Back Book or others)? We would appreciate any help available. I have lined up a clarinet, flute, trombone and percussion - trumpet is a problem at the moment. My school is an inner-city type.

(Ed. Comment: Can any member assist Dorothy with her appeal for help, in her efforts to involve a new generation in ragtime?)

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Charles B. Davis, Jr.
444 Rocky Run Road, Midway Park, N. C. 28544, U. S. A.

I would appreciate your letting the members know that I need the following copies of the "Ragtime Society Newsletter" to complete my collection: Vol. 1, No. 6, Vol. 3, No. 8, Vol. 4, No. 4 and Vol. 5, Nos. 2 and 4. I will accept copies or the originals. Also I have an extra copy of Vol. 2, No. 5 for May-June of 1963 which I will trade for any of the above as well as an index to the Ragtime Review for 1962-1966 which I assembled a few years ago.

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On Tuesday, November 27th, at 21. 50 hours, we had a 55' TV show in the series "JAZZLAND" on the 2nd programme. It was titled "SCOTT JOPLIN, Premiere Partie". Realized by TV producer and jazz lover Jean-Christophe AVERTY, it consisted in a running commentary about Joplin's life, on a picture background of period photographs and documents of the period, most interesting, especially the ragtime sheet music, shown here straight from Averty's collection of same. This commentary was interspersed with performances of Joplin tunes, in chronological order, by French musicians.

1.	Crush Collision March	Jean Claude Pelletier (pno.)
2.	Original Rags	High Society Jazz Band
3.	Maple Leaf Rag	Claude Bolling (pno.)
4.	Swipesy Cakewalk	Claude Luter and his trio
5.	Sunflower Slow Drag	Martine Morel (pno.)
6.	Easy Winners	Raymond Fonseque Ork.
7.	Elite Syncopations	Marc Berkovitch (pno.)
8.	The Entertainer	High Society Jazz Band
9.	Strenuous Life	Eddie Bernard (pno.)
10.	Weeping Willow	Claude Luter's Ork.
11.	Palm Leaf Rag	Eddie Bernard (pno.)
12.	Something Doing	Raymond Fonseque Trio
13.	Chrysanthemum	Martial Solal (pno.)
14.	The Cascades	Raymond Fonseque Ork.
15.	Bethena	Jean Claude Pelletier (pno.)
16.	Ragtime Dance	Raymond Fonseque Ork. with Alice NISAS and Luis CHANG (dancers)

Roger Richard
Brioude, Haute Loire, France.

(Ed. Comment: Roger keeps us posted on ragtime activities in France from time to time. His report of the 1973 TV program is a revelation of the many artists who are interested in performing authentic classical ragtime.)

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Vincent Terbois
Chemin d'Ecogia 22, 1290 Versoix, Geneva, Switzerland

Please note that everyone travelling this part of Europe is invited to knock on my door, I have enough material here to discuss about ragtime. Last year I enjoyed the visit of Dave Jasen.

I can also say that ragtime is more and more in demand here. Some records reached the local TV and radio stations and it is not rare to listen to the Joplin music. This is no doubt a consequence of the continuous efforts of the Ragtime Society and the Maple Leaf because there is a clear link between all the records which have been issued during the last 10 years.

Thus, please accept my congratulations and thanks for all your efforts and devotion. We, in Europe, are much indebted to you all.

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There is, without doubt, a small boom in ragtime here at present. A series of six delightful programmes on the development of the music was put on by the BBC in the summer, and is already being repeated. Even in the music shop in Chesterfield, Joplin is displayed in the window, though the shop assistant can't make up her mind whether or not it's respectable music. And in the Royal Variety Command Performance, from the Palladium, an act was performed to a background of, I believe, Fig Leaf Rag.

Peter Turner
Chesterfield, Derbyshire, England

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As a senior at the High School over here I have been working to promote ragtime, mostly through my rendition of Maple Leaf and The Entertainer but converts are hard to come by, but that's too bad for them. (As a matter of fact I have 4 converts, my girlfriend, two other friends and my Spanish teacher; my music teachers think ragtime belongs in the barroom.

Lance Camarena
San Jose, California, U.S.A.

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I enjoy reading "THE RAGTIMER" and thanks for the "SOMETHING DOING" information. I was able to see Max Morath when he was in Manassas, Va. - what a great performer!

Mrs. Robert Gaudlitz
Richmond, Va., U.S.A.

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CAPSULE
INFORMATION
RELEASES ---------- FOR HAPPY HUNTING

NOTE: We often receive information from members and other sources which can be passed along in brief form as items of possible general interest. CAPSULE INFORMATION RELEASES do not refer to items or material which can be obtained from the SOCIETY. Further, we do not guarantee the accuracy of the information given. Under the conditions stated, we are able to publicize a broader coverage of promising information coming to our attention.

Book - The Art of Ragtime by William J. Schafer and Johannes Riedel - (cloth bound, 250 pages) deals with "Form and Meaning of an Original Black

American Art". Published by Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, U.S.A. 70803 ($10.00 in U.S.)

LP Record - PIANO RAGTIME on "Petit Journal" Vol. 1 with MARC BERCOVITZ (PROM 1 - T) contains 12 numbers - Joplin, Scott, Turpin, Lamb, Eubie Blake, etc. Recommended by member Henri Parisot, Sceaux, France. Available from Promophone Club Promotionnel de Musique Contemporaine, 61 rue Meslay - 75003 Paris, France.

LP Record - New Black Eagle Band - GHB59 - The New Black Eagle Jazz Band consists of a group of Boston area business and professional men and includes Society member, Dr. Eli Newberger (See Something Doing). Record can be ordered directly from the band group (U.S. price postpaid $5.50) at 128 Front Street, Marblehead, Mass. 01945.

LP Record - The Classic Rags of Joe Lamb Golden Crest CRS 4127 played by pianist Milton Kaye - 13 Lamb compositions produced by Rudi Blesh and includes a bonus record of Milton Kaye and Rudi discussing Joe Lamb and authentic ragtime. Golden Crest Records Inc., 220 Broadway, Huntington Station, N.Y.

Music Folio - I Remember Ragtime - a selection of songs by Ian Whitcomb - contains 18 numbers. A sampling of vintage ragtime along with comic songs in the Music Hall tradition, and modern ragtime compositions.
Published by Charles Hansen, 1860 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023 (U.S. price $4.95).

LP Record - Scott Joplin - PALM LEAF RAG - Angel label S-36074. The Southland Stingers with Ralph Grierson, piano-band group playing 10 numbers including Palm Leaf, Bethena, The Favorite, Stoptime, Gladiolus, Solace, Pine Apple, Pleasant Moments, Wall Street - Capitol Records Inc.

LP Record - Finger-bustin' Ragtime - Dave Jasen - Blue Goose 3001 - 54 King Street, New York, N.Y. 10014 (U.S. price postpaid $5.95). Dave plays 16 rags including some of his own.

2 LP Records - King of Folk Ragtime - Trebor Tichenor (Dirty Shame Records Stereo 2001) contains 14 piano solo performances by Trebor - includes compositions by Wenrich, Joplin/Hayden, Drumheller, Marshall, Hunter, Turpin, Richmond, Broady, Campbell, Harney, plus 3 of Trebor's own works.

available from Dirty Shame Records, P.O. Box 5217, Hannegan Station, St. Louis, Missouri, U.S.A. 63139 ($5.95 P.P. U.S. add $1.00 other countries).

2. LP Records (Cont'd) - The New Black Eagle Jazz Band (On The River) Dirty Shame Records Stereo 2002 recorded aboard Goldenrod Showboat 1973 during 9th Festival - 7 man band with "Something Doing" - Terry Waldo sub, Pianist and Eli Newberger, Tuba. - 8 tracks range thru Rags - blues - Jazz to Pop (same source and price)

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ST. LOUIS RAGTIME FESTIVAL

Betty Redelsheimer of St. Louis has sent along some information about plans for the 10th ANNUAL RAGTIME FESTIVAL on the GOLDENROD SHOWBOAT at ST. LOUIS, MO. to be held from Tuesday, JULY 9, 1974 through Sunday, JULY 14, 1974.

Bands:	Turk Murphy's Band
	St. Louis Ragtimers
	Salty Dogs
	The Mudcats
Pianists:	Dave Jasen
	Knocky Parker
	Butch Thompson
	Terry Waldo
	Dick Wellstood
	Bob Wright

The package price will be $12.00 per person for all performances (5 evenings, and Sunday afternoon). Tickets by the day will also be available. (Ed. Comment: It promises to be another great Festival.)

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SOMETHING DOING...

JOHN ARPIN - in the Odyssey Lounge at the top of the Hyatt Regency, Toronto, 9:00 p. m. to 1:00 a. m. (Watch local papers for John's move to the new "PRINCE HOTEL" when it opens.)

RAGTIME BOB DARCH - in the Times Square Lounge, King Edward Hotel, King Street, Toronto, Mon. to Sat. 9:00 p. m. to 1:00 a. m.

- at Hotel Londonderry, Edmonton, Alberta, Mon. to Sat., July 1 to 27.

DON EWELL - at the Life Lounge, 3233 N. Ocean Blvd., Fort Lauderdale, Florida, with Andy Bartha and the Deep South Dixieland Jazz Band.

DAVE FLOWITT - at the Brunswick Hotel, 481 Bloor St. W., with the Climax Jazz Band, Wed. 9:00 p. m. to 1:00 a. m.

- at Grossman's Tavern, 379 Spadina Ave., with Dr. MacJazz band, Thurs. 8:30 p. m. to 12:30 a. m.

JIM KAPLAN - at the Pizza-Stein, 1428 W. Galena Ave., Freeport, Illinois on Tues., Fri. and Sundays.

JOHN MADDOX - at Cherry Creek Inn, Denver, Colorado, May 6 to June 29 - also from August 19 to September 21.

BOB MILLS - at The Norseman, 1125 Dundas Highway East, Mississauga, Mon. to Sat. 9:00 p. m. to 1 p. m.

MIKE MONTGOMERY - at The Dakota Inn, Rathskeller, Detroit, Michigan Friday nights.

MAX MORATH - on the road with his new show "The Ragtime Years".

DR. ELI NEWBERGER - and The New Black Eagle Jazz Band at the Stickey Wicket Pub, West Main Street, Hopkinton, Mass. Thurs. 8:00 p. m. to 12:00 p. m. (Pianist is Bob Pilsbury.).

TOM NOEL - on the road with his living portrayal show "Mark Twain at Home".

CHARLIE RASCH - with Sister Kate, at Little Caesars, 15060 Eureka Road, Southgate, Michigan, Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights.

TOM SCHMUTZLER - and the Hardware City Temperance and ragtime Society, at Shakey's Pizza Parlor, Vernon, Conn. - Fridays and Saturdays.

BOB SEELEY - at Charlie's Crab Restaurant & Lounge, 3230 Pine Lake Road, Orchard Lake, Michigan, Monday thru Saturday.

STEVE SPRACKLEN - at Canadian National's Hotel Macdonald, Edmonton, Alberta thru summer 1974.

DAN SUMMERS - and the New Charleston Chasers (with the ODJB sound), at Speak Steak House, Whirlpool St. at Cleveland Avenue, Niagara Falls, N.Y., Saturday nights and some Friday nights.

TREBOR TICHENOR - and the Saint Louis Ragtimers, on The Goldenrod Showboat, at St. Louis, Missouri. (Also do playing dates on the riverboat Beck Thatcher).

TERRY WALDO - at Deibel's Restaurant, German Village, Columbus, Ohio, Wednesday and Thursday nights.

TEX WYNDHAM - and The Red Lion Jazz Band, appearing regularly, at The Surrey Restaurant, 1101 Philadelphia Pike, Wilmington, Del.

PERFORMERS: Please keep us posted on your whereabouts and your schedule will appear in this column.

Max- this is the booklet saw in a store - a real steal" of Ripley's album cover - RC

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